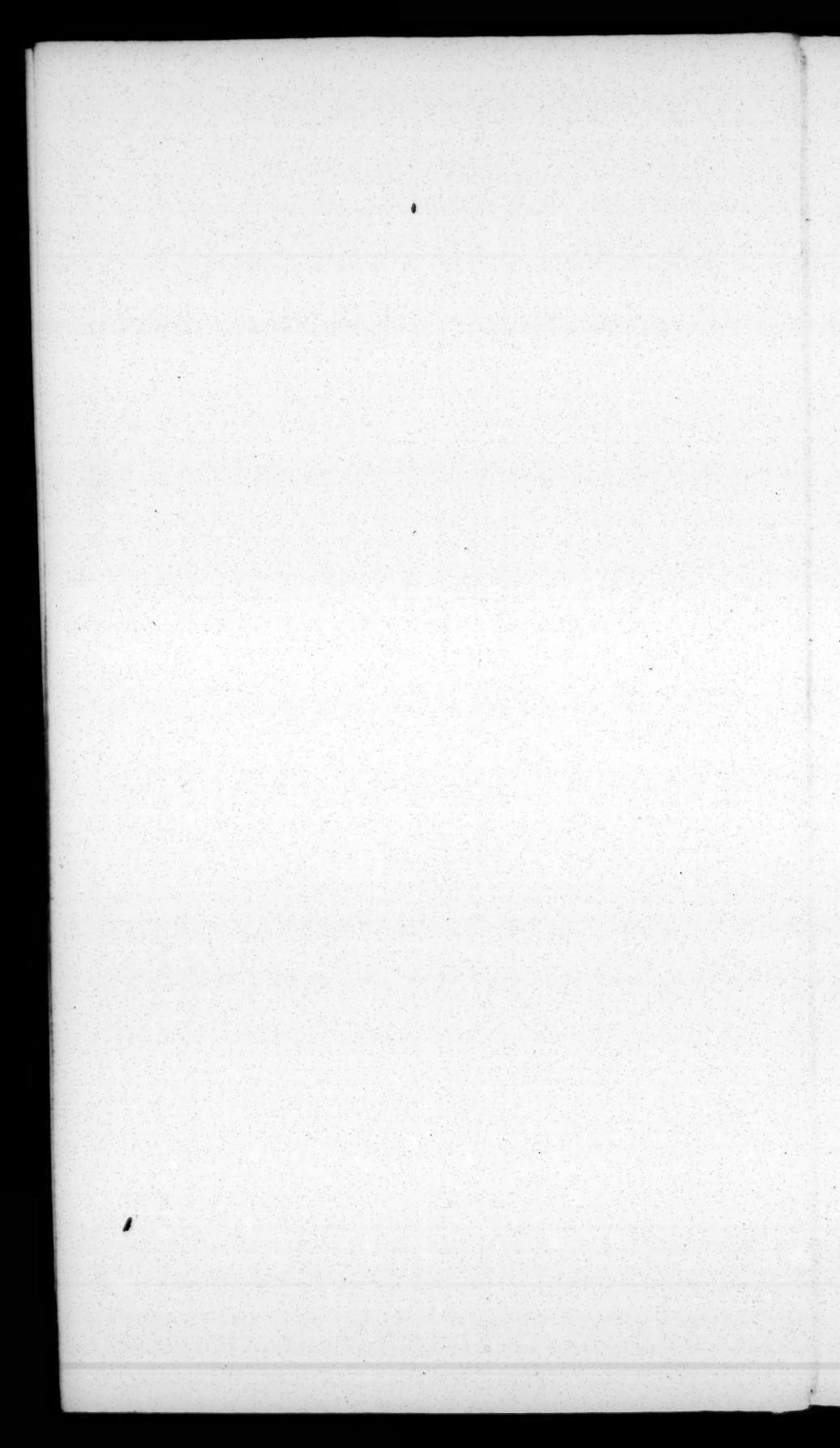


THE
SAILORS.

VOL. II.



THE
SAILORS.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHORESS OF COUNT DE SANTERRE,
THE ENGLISH NUN, AND LINDOR.

VOL. II.



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THE SAILORS.

C H A P. I.

The buds put forth, but blighted soon;
They reached not May's enchanting noon.
The buds of hope too quickly shoot,
To keep due vigour at the root!

BELOS.

ON the following morning, and at rather an earlier hour than the family were accustomed to assemble in the breakfast room, Hortensia happened to go into the chamber of Mrs. Davenant, was surprized to behold that lady in an agony of weeping, as she pressed her little Eliza to her bosom, with all the

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B

fondness

fondness of maternal anxiety and sorrow.

Hortensia advancing, Mrs. Davenant held out her hand to her, and immediately transferring her eyes from her face, with a look of inexpressible anguish, to some papers that were scattered on the floor, she said,

“Behold, my friend, the only evil that I dreaded fallen upon me. My unkind, my mistaken Harry, ceases to regard his Maria with confidence and affection: he has permitted the malice of a demon to blast our connubial peace; and now flies far beyond the knowledge of that unabated truth and tenderness, that would bring him back to faith and happiness.”

Hortensia, when astonishment permitted her to speak, would have attempted

tempted to question and console; but Mrs. Davenant, rising, and retiring to her closet, said as she went,

“ You may pity, Hortensia, but you cannot comfort! Read at once my accusation and my sentence, and then tell me, if I am not most unfortunate.”

Hortensia, almost petrified, gathered up the papers; some of which she perceived to be in the writing of Captain Davenant, and one letter, needed not the detested signature of Russel, to convince Hortensia that it was the performance of that demon of malice and revenge. The contents were these:

‘To Capt. DAVENANT.—*Diana.*

‘When, my dear Davenant, you at
‘parting requested me to be watchful

‘over the peace of your family, I fancied that your solicitude resulted only from your tender attachment to a lovely faultless wife, and an infant cherub, which was, I knew, fondly beloved. I fancied too, that in your smiling charge relative to the fair Sydney, I could trace an unbreathed wish, that your friend might find a sweet reward for his watchful cares, in her affection and the possession of her interesting person.

‘These were the visions that floated in my mind, as (from the rocks of Beachy) I contemplated the departing Diana; and that very night it was my fortune to commence the execution of my office of protector.

‘Returning

‘Returning at so late an hour, as to
‘be entirely dark, from the mead
‘through the grounds belonging to
‘Russelstown, I overtook Miss Syd-
‘ney and her friend: I observed that
‘they avoided me, as I then thought,
‘from having no knowledge of my
‘person; but I have since had reason
‘to believe that it was their certainty
‘of who I was that made them endea-
‘vour to escape me. When, how-
‘ever, I joined them, Maria ex-
‘pressed pleasure in the rencounter;
‘but Hortensia, either a worse, or a
‘more consummate hypocrite than
‘her friend, saluted me with an equi-
‘vocal compliment, which but ill
‘veiled her displeasure at my ap-
‘proach. At that time, however, I
‘thought

‘thought not of it: nor I confess, was
‘my suspicion in the least roused,
‘when I observed a man, very much
‘wrapped up, lingering near the house.

‘For some time, I continued to
‘visit the fair friends constantly, more
‘for my own enjoyment, than with
‘any view to watching them: but
‘when circumstances arose that strong-
‘ly reminded me of your last request,
‘the task you seemed then to assign
‘me; and while convinced that the
‘most anxious solicitude was necessary
‘to the sacred bond of friendship, the
‘office it commanded me to take, be-
‘came hateful to me. It was not very
‘long, Davenant, till I found my
‘cares were not unnecessary, and the
‘conviction, by depriving me of rest,
‘rendered

'rendered it easy to me to watch the
'motions of the nocturnal visitor to
'Russelstown; nor could I be at a
'loss to know who attracted him to
'the mansion of my absent friend.
'Maria, with all the blindness of in-
'fatuated and successful love, fancied
'herself secure from detection, and
'treated the censor of her actions with
'the most bewitching kindness: but
'the cool and penetrating Hortensia
'discovered my view in my constant
'visits, and behaved with a circum-
spectioп, the effect of suspicion, and
'which did not conceal her hatred of
'me. Yes, Davenant, the gentle,
'the correct, the interesting Sydney,
'could not conceal her abhorrence of
'a man, who dared be watchful of
'the

‘the honor of his friend, and inter-
‘rupt the progress of an infamous
‘amour.

‘At length, I ventured to hint to
‘Maria, that as one firmly attached
‘to you, I could not answer to my
‘conscience to pass by in silence, the
‘glaring impropriety of her conduct.

‘It was then the proud, the impe-
‘rious woman stood unveiled: she
‘reproached me for my interference,
‘in terms of fury and invective; and
‘threatened me with the vengeance of
‘her paramour.—Need I say more,
‘Davenant—she was bold in her
‘crimes, and I saw her no more. In
‘a few days, however, she left Eng-
‘land; and in the abode she has cho-
‘sen for herself in Normandy, the
‘same

‘same man who betrayed her honor,
‘and who followed her to France, is
‘her constant visitor.—’

Written two days afterwards.

‘I had finished my letter, and in-
‘tended to send it to Martinique,
‘when I learnt at the Admiralty, that
‘the Diana had been ordered home
‘under your command, and that she
‘was now near Europe. I shall there-
‘fore leave this at your agent’s in
‘London, and in one week I shall
‘myself set out for Nice.

‘In the cover that enclosed my
‘letter when I first wrote it, I had
‘written some comments on the tale
‘I now submit to your examination;
‘but I now think it best to forbear
‘them. Should you wish to see the

‘fallen Maria, she is at the chateau
‘of M. de Celandelle, near Rochelle.

‘On one subject, however, I must
‘congratulate you: you are appointed
‘to command a ship now going on a
‘secret and distant expedition; an of-
‘fice of trust, your capacity for which
‘was certified by your ever faithful

‘RUSSEL.’

Thus ended this strange epistle, from
which Hortensia turned with impatient
sorrow and consternation, to that written
by Captain Davenant to his wife, and
which enclosed the detestable scroll she
had been perusing.

To Mrs. DAVENANT.—*London.*

‘When, my once beloved, my
‘lost Maria, has perused the enclosed

‘effusion of generous friendship, it
‘cannot appear strange to her, to be
‘told, that the husband who was once
‘happy in her affections, is deter-
‘mined never again to behold the in-
‘jurer of his honor—the betrayer of
‘his peace! Unhappy woman! fare-
‘well. I fly from that country you
‘have rendered hateful to me; to one
‘where it will be impossible to disco-
‘ver me.

‘The friend to whom I am indebted
‘for rousing me from a dream of dis-
‘honourable security, will constantly
‘remit to you an income, equal to
‘half my pay, which must serve to
‘support you.—For your *friend*,
‘your Hortensia, I can do nothing.

‘Happy, fortunate St. Aubin, whose
‘life was not embittered by the *detected*
‘baseness of the woman you loved!
‘Happy St. Aubin! you have es-
‘caped the anguish which now dis-
‘tracts the miserable

‘H. DAVENANT.’

In reading this short and incoherent letter, Hortensia shed torrents of tears. There was something, which more strongly pourtrayed the distraction of the mind of the unhappy writer, than a long epistle, fraught with complainings and reproaches, could have done.

Hortensia again perused Lord Russel’s letter, and as she did so, could not help exclaiming in the bitterness of her heart,
“Just God! is this indeed thy will!—
that

that a cruel coincidence of immaterial circumstances, should conspire with malicious vengeance, to blast the fame, the peace and honor of the fairest and most gentle of her sex—to plunge the noble Davenant in injustice and misery!"

But these were only the wild effusions of sympathetic sorrow, which so much weighed upon her spirits, that desirous alike to avoid Mrs Davenant, and the rest of the family, she put on her cloak, and drawing her morning bonnet close over her face, she went to her accustomed promenade on the cliffs. Here as she slowly, and with her hand shading her grief swollen eyes, paced the solitary walk, the letter of Captain Davenant rose strongly to her memory, and she was not a little perplexed to

discover the meaning of his reference to the enviable lot of his friend St. Aubin. “Alas! dear St. Aubin!” she unconsciously exclaimed, as her tears again flowed with more violence than before.

“Happy St. Aubin! those precious tears embalm thy remains!” repeated a voice behind her, almost as tender and as mournful as her own; and Hortensia, turning, discovered the unknown naval officer, with an expression of so much mild benignity and pitying sympathy in his intelligent countenance, that she felt an instantaneous conviction of the purport of Captain Davenant’s words.

“Great God!” she exclaimed; and unable to articulate another word, fixed her enquiring eyes on the face of the stranger.

“The

“The grave in which he reposes is honourable to a British seaman,” said he, with animation and tenderness blended in his manner.

“Is St. Aubin then dead?” returned Hortensia faintly, and growing so extremely sick, that the stranger observing her paleness and trembling, threw his arm round her waist to support her, as he replied mournfully,

“He is. Did you not know it, when you repeated his name with such pathetic softness?”

“Oh no!” Hortensia answered, as (forgetting that he was entirely unknown to her) she hid her face on the shoulder of the stranger; who unable to resist the desire he felt to know the cause of her

her sorrow, said, "Why then did you weep for him?"

"Alas! you knew him not!" exclaimed Hortensia almost unconsciously.

"Not know him!" repeated the stranger in an accent of surprize. "Not know the man, to whom my beloved, my lovely charge, gave hopes of her hand!—Oh Hortensia! could I—your guardian, your protector, see those affections to which I fondly aspired, lost to me, and not endeavour to prove if they were worthily bestowed?—And they were!—Weep then, my love! weep for your Lionel, yet preserve some regard for the living St. Aubin!"

The grief of Hortensia now gave place to wonder and surprize: sorrow was suspended, and that suspension was,

as

as is usual, the prelude to its ceasing to wound so deeply. Hortensia gazed on the stranger with an aspect of astonishment and enquiry. He observed it:—“Yes, my Hortensia;” he said, “In me you behold the last surviving relative of the man so dear to you, and the only person now entitled to the name of St. Aubin.”

“But you—my guardian, my protector;” repeated Hortensia incoherently, as she continued to gaze on the animated countenance of her new friend.

“Ah, Miss Sydney,” he replied, “would that I deserved those distinctions! But heaven only knows how pure and disinterested were the motives of that solicitude that led me to hover over your dwelling! to watch your unprotected

teeted steps—and oh! with what sensations! with what a vanity of emotions have I traversed the grounds, from whence I could distinguish your chamber window; and as morning approached, guided my little bark across the bay that all day long divided me from you."

"Great God!" cried Hortensia, "was it then you, who at first so much alarmed, and afterwards so much surprized me, as to the motives of your visits?"

Then suddenly recollecting the letter of Lord Russel, she exclaimed, bursting again into tears, "Fatal, fatal visits!—destructive in their consequences."

"Not to the sweetest and fairest of her sex?" cried he impatiently.

"Oh! yes, yes!" returned Hortensia, in a tone of agony; and afterwards adding

ing, with an earnestness that the enthusiasm of the moment gave to her whole manner:

“If you would not utterly destroy the repose of an unhappy being, who never injured you, and who is already but too deeply wounded, swear to me, that you will directly leave this place! that you will deny having ever visited it——”

“Hold, Madam!” interrupted he; “I have never yet been guilty of a falsehood; nor will I even for Hortensia Sydney! Since it is necessary to your repose, that I leave this place, I will do so; and I hope I may not be questioned on the subject!—Farewell, Hortensia!—The dream of partial fondness is at an end with

with my guardianship; but I cannot retain this."

As he spoke, he attempted to put a small leather pocket book into her hand; but as she pushed it from her, it fell on the ground, and its owner, darting away, was out of sight in a moment.

Every occurrence of this short interview was so incomprehensible, so astonishing, that Hortensia, could scarcely believe herself awake: yet the words of the stranger still seemed to ring in her ears, and she could yet scarcely believe him gone: but he was so; and only the pocket-book remained as a memorial that he had been there. She now took it up; and whilst she was yet deliberating upon whether she ought to open it, her finger pressed the spring, and the lock gave

gave way. The pocket-book she found to contain bank notes to the amount of 2000*l.* and with them was a small piece of folded paper, which on opening she discovered a lock of hair, tied with a little gold bow, apparently designed to be put into a locket.

As Hortensia was examining it, something heavy fell on the ground, which she immediately stooped to pick up, and in doing so, perceived that it was a very elegant locket set with brilliants, one of which had fallen from the setting, and was (as she conceived) the reason of the hair having been displaced. For the latter, Hortensia now anxiously sought to discover an owner; or rather to discover from whose head it had been taken. Was it from that of the stranger?

His hair which was never very much powdered, was certainly dark! so was the lock; but the precise shade of the former could not be distinguished; or if it could, how many people are there whose hair is precisely the same colour: for instance, that of Hortensia herself closely resembled that she held in her hand; and she was very certain, that to *her* it had never belonged.

Unable to decide on this point, she placed the hair in the locket, which she carefully folded in paper, and deposited in the pocket-book.

Another paper only remained to be examined: it was a copy of those beautiful lines of de Florian, in the original language, accompanied with an imperfect translation into English:

En

En vain j'adresse au ciel une plainte importune ;
Le cil n'ecoute plus mes accens douloureux.
Le redoutable amour, la volage fortune
Tout jusqu' à l'amitié, seul bien des malheureux,
Semble se reunir, pour comblér mà misère.
Je remplis mon destin ; je suis nè pour souffrir :
Mon cœur n'à plus rien sur la terre,
Je ne peux plus aimer, et je ne peux mourir.

Pure et sainte amitié ; doux charme de la vie,
Je t'immole à l'amour, mais qui l m'en à coutè !
Rends dumoins le repos à mon âme flettrie :
On dis que tu suffis pour la felicitè.
Loin de me soulager, tu combles ma misere.
• Je remplis mon destin, je suis nè pour souffrir :
 Mon cœur n'à plus rien sur la terre,
Je ne peux plus aimer, et je ne peux mourir.

DE GALATEE.

The hand writing both of the French song and the translation, was familiar to Hortensia; as it was the same she had been in the habit of contemplating every day, in the admonitory fragment she

D 2 had

had found the evening before she left Russelstown.

Strange as it may seem, it was now near half an hour since Lionel St. Aubin, Captain Davenant's hint of his destiny, and the certainty of his death, had been as totally forgotten by the fair Sydney, as if his existence had been entirely unknown to her; and would have probably remained so a much longer term, had not the sudden recollection of Mrs. Davenant's unfortunate situation, now recalled St. Aubin also to her remembrance; and her thoughts were chiefly occupied by him during her short but melancholy walk to the chateau, where it was necessary she should appear at breakfast, to account to M. de Celan-

delle

delle for the absence of Mrs. Davenant, who she could not expect would join the party.

C H A P. II.

AFTER partaking of breakfast, in a silence, which was only interrupted by the persevering garrulity of Madame de Polignac, M. de Celandelle left the room, and Hortensia was, for a time, compelled to affect listening to the nonsense that her only remaining companion overwhelmed her with; till her host returned to the apartment, and desiring to speak with her, led her into the study; where he said, “I know not how I can make a request to *la belle Sydney*, that

may

may seem troublesome; but my unhappy daughter, madam, who has some recollection of having seen a stranger, (though so very imperfect a one, that she persists in saying it was her Edward) will not be pacified till she sees you: she remembers your gentle and generous pity for her misfortune, and insists that you will, if summoned, visit her.—”

“Lead me to her instantly, my dear sir,” interrupted Hortensia, giving him her hand, and her countenance animated by the benevolence of her mind.

The old man could not articulate his thanks, but raising his tearful eyes to her face, earnestly invoked a blessing on her, and accompanied her to the chamber, where, the night before, she had left Cecilia.

The

The poor maniac had insisted on being dressed, but had (from weakness) been forced to lye down on the bed; from which, however, she sprung the moment she perceived Hortensia, and advanced to her. But before she reached the spot where the latter had stopped, she checked herself, and with less precipitancy approached; and taking her hand, pressed it to her bosom, with a look of such melancholy tenderness, as was inconceivably affecting. She then led her to the fire, near which stood a small table, with a breakfast laid on it, and placing a chair for her, invited her to eat some of the fruits before her.

From what M. de Celandelle had said, Hortensia had expected to witness very outrageous behaviour, and had resolved

solved not to be shocked by it: but she was nearly overcome by meeting the most elegant attentions from Cecilia; who had nothing of the lunatic about her, but her expressing no surprize that a total stranger should be a visitor in her chamber.

In a short time M. de Celandelle (who when he left Hortensia at the door of his daughter's room, had been obliged to retire to vent his emotions) joined them, and was delighted to find Cecilia so tranquil. He spoke tenderly to her, and perceiving that she was more rational than usual, enquired if she knew who her new friend was? "Perfectly," she replied calmly, "she is my sister Xaviera."

"Oh Xaviera! Xaviera! my murdered innocent!" exclaimed de Celandelle

delle, cut to the heart by this mention of his lost daughter.

“Hush, hush;” said Cecilia, with an expression of anxiety and sorrow in her hitherto wild eyes: “you *did* murder one person; but you know I have promised to make no complaint.”

She then turned to Hortensia, saying softly, “My dear Xaviera, now that we have met once more, you shall have no cause to complain of my reserve. But where is your husband, my sister? has he left you, as mine as done? Ah! Xaviera! you will repent—”

Her senses seemed to wander yet more wildly, and she talked only incoherent nonsense for some time: at last she asked Hortensia what was her name?

“Sydney,” she replied.

“Sydney!”

"Sydney!" almost shrieked Cecilia, grasping her arm with a violence that pained and terrified her. "Oh do not say so!—Do not say that Sydney is *your* husband!—He is mine!—Edward Sydney is the master of this hand, and of my sad heart!"

It was now Hortensia's turn to feel the extreme of amazement, which left her no power to speak. The name of Edward Sydney vibrated on her heart; since it was that of her youngest brother: but still the idea that for a moment crossed her seemed ridiculous.

Cecilia still grasped her arm, wildly demanding if Sydney was *her* husband? Though when she repeatedly assured her that he was *not*, she did not seem capable of understanding her.

At

At length, however, she was pacified; and her wandering ideas taking another turn, she entirely forgot the circumstance.

She now began to converse with some coherency; and could Hortensia have been certain that her own family was not connected with this unfortunate, she would have been charmed with her interesting manners; and her understanding, which though deranged, still retained much of its native vigour.

It happened that a few days before this period, Hortensia in looking over a trunk she had brought from England, found a miniature picture of her brother Edward, so much injured by damp, as to be in some places mouldy; and in hopes that warmth might recover it, had hung

hung it round her neck by a narrow ribbon; wearing the picture in her bosom.

Cecilia now observed this ribbon, and at the same time that she enquired if any ornament was attached to it, drew out the suspended portrait. The moment she cast her eyes on the features, she uttered a violent scream, and fainted. Hortensia, excessively alarmed, endeavoured to disengage the picture from the hand of the inanimate Cecilia; but finding it impossible, slipped the knot, and leaving it with her, flew in search of Hortense, who, however, was only in the next room.

It was not without the greatest difficulty that the hapless Cecilia was restored to life: but though she breathed, she

appeared totally insensible to all around her; and her fainting fits returned so often, that Hortensia, having assisted the old servant to place her in bed, went in the utmost distress, to find M. de Celandelle, to inform him of his daughter's situation.

The old man accompanied her back to the chamber of Cecilia, and approaching the bed, started at beholding her extended without motion on her couch; her features convulsed, and with one hand firmly grasping the picture in such a manner that the ribbon only was visible: he gazed on this affecting object for some moments in speechless agony; but the feelings of his heart then found vent:

“My Cecilia!” he cried; “My child!

art thou too lost to me? Miserable old man! whose crimes and sorrows will soon sink him to the earth! Oh Xaviera! I sacrificed thee to a tyrannous pride, and thou art avenged! Come now, much injured du Pont, and behold him who deprived thee of thy Xaviera, childless, and miserable!—”

Cecilia now shewed some signs of life, and was in a short time restored to a state of torpid existence; which, though more shocking, was less affecting than the incoherencies of insanity.

Hortensia now repaired to the chamber of Mrs. Davenant, whom she was conscious of apparently neglecting. She found that lady no longer given up to sorrow, but sitting calmly at her writing desk. The native energy of her mind,

had enabled her to shake off the load of anguish that her husband's letter had impressed it with; and she now only sought the means of unveiling to him, the treachery to which the repose of both had been sacrificed.

Proud in the consciousness of innocence, and depending on the candour of the man she had for near nine years almost worshipped, she wanted nothing but a direction to him; for which she applied by the next post to his agent.

When Hortensia entered the room, Mrs. Davenant laid down her pen, and took the little Eliza, (now near a year old) who had been standing beside her, on her lap; and extending her hand to her young friend, saluted her with, "My dear Hortensia!" Miss Sydney seated herself

herself beside her, and expressed a sort of pleased surprize at seeing her so calm. “When, my friend,” said Mrs. Davenant, “you have lived as many years in the world as I have done; or (which God forbid) you have seen as many of its storms as I have felt, you will wonder at your present ideas. Believe me, Hortensia, there are very few situations, in which, if one has resolution, they may not be calm and composed. That mine is one of those very few, is undeniable; but, without some efforts on my part, to undeceive my poor Davenant, how am I to be restored to that love and confidence I have never deserved to forfeit?”

“Ah! Mrs. Davenant,” exclaimed

Miss Sydney, "you are every way a superior being!"

"Indeed, my dear Hortensia, I am not. From a very early age, I have been accustomed to think and act for myself; and have long been practised in the school of adversity; and I cannot suffer this sorrow (though a new one) to overcome me. Ah, my good girl, what should I have done during the first six years of my marriage, if I had yielded to every *new* affliction. Poverty, and all its concomitant train of evils and mortifications, I was *then* unuse'd to."

Hortensia now mentioned her interview with the British officer; and shed torrents of tears, as she repeated his assertion of the death of St. Aubin. She next produced the pocket-book, and with

with Mrs. Davenant, again examined its contents.

Mrs. Davenant kindly forbore to notice to Hortensia, the bad tendency that she doubted not her request to the stranger to leave the place would have; but appeared solely engrossed by a wish to know who the officer could possibly be.

She (as did Miss Sydney) perfectly recollect^{ed} having heard Lionel St. Aubin say that he had only one relation in the world; and equally remembered that he distinguished that one by the name of Marlow. This person, then, calling himself St. Aubin, must be some one, either not related to Lionel, or unknown to him. But resolved to know him, and also to obviate the ill effects of Hortensia's charge to him to leave

leave Rochelle ; as soon as her young friend had left her, Mrs. Davenant again applied to her pen, and wrote the following note :

‘The person who so kindly interested himself for Miss Sydney, will surely be pleased to hear that her request to him to leave Rochelle, arose from a mistake, which Mrs. Davenant, the friend of Miss Sydney, and the person who has the honor to address him, will be happy to have an opportunity to explain. An unhappy and innocent being might, Miss Sydney thought, be injured by the continued vicinity of her unknown friend; but in expressing this fear, she alluded not to herself. Mrs. Davenant

'nant requests the favor of a visit from
'the gentleman she has the honor to
'address, as soon as may be conve-
'nient, at the Chateau de Celandelle.'

This billet Mrs. Davenant directed to Mr. St. Aubin, Royal British Navy, and gave to one of the most intelligent of the neighbouring peasants, with directions to enquire out the abode of the person; or in case he met such a gentleman as she described, he was to deliver it to him.

With this vague uncertain direction, *Peirrot* set out, not in the least doubting the performance of his commission: but Mrs. Davenant, conscious of the oddity of the measure, was less sanguine; and as she pressed her little Eliza to her heart, dropped over her the bitterest

tears of anxiety and apprehension for her future destiny: which painful sensations were not a little encreased, when *Peirrot* returned in the evening, with the intelligence that he had discovered the lodgings of the gentleman he had been sent to seek; but that he had gone from thence four hours before.

In the mean time Hortensia continued the assiduous attendant of the unhappy Cecilia, whose torpid existence was undisturbed by pain, or indeed by sensation of any kind, till the third day of her illness, when without any previous symptom of returning recollection, she raised herself a little in her bed, and drawing back the curtain, fixed her eyes intently on the picture of Sydney, which had never been out of her hand from

the

the time she first gained possession of it.

Hortensia observed her contemplating it for some moments, with attention; then, whilst a faint smile played on her features, she pressed it to her lips, and reclining her head on the pillow, continued to gaze on it.

Miss Sydney now advanced, and softly asked the fair sufferer how she felt herself.

"Much better," she replied; adding, "I have been a long time ill:—so long—that I have forgot every thing: all but this dear picture!"

As she spoke she again raised it to her lips, and Hortensia enquired, "But have you forgot me, Cecilia?"

"Almost—but yet I remember having
seen

seen you in my dreams, and once I thought you were Xaviera!" She continued, deeply sighing, "I remember too that I dreamt she was dead:—they told me so, I recollect; but perhaps she is only married to Du Pont.—He loved her to distraction—and sure they would not kill *him too* for that." Cecilia paused for some time, and appeared considering; she then said humbly, "Pray forgive me: but indeed I have forgot your name.—I used to love it, though now I cannot think what it is."

The lovely questioner seemed impatiently to expect the reply of Hortensia, who trembling, and extremely agitated, pronounced the name, "Hortensia Sydney."

"Sydney!" repeated the fair Cecilia, with

with a sigh that seemed to come from the bottom of her heart; “Oh yes! that was *his* name: but *he* is dead:—that was *no* dream. Poor Edward Sydney!—See Hortensia—this is his picture!—I cannot be mistaken.—But ^{he} is dead!” she repeated with another deep sigh; “*That* was *no* dream.”

“It was a mistake, my dear, my unhappy sister!” exclaimed Hortensia, as she clasped the faded form of the once beauteous Cecilia to her bosom; “He lives, my poor Cecilia! The husband so long, so fondly lamented, lives!”

Cecilia, still remaining incredulous, but in appearance perfectly sane, Hortensia produced the last letter she had received from her brother, dated about six months back; and Cecilia, animated

by hope, found strength to read it entirely through.

She then threw herself into the arms of Hortensia, and for the first time since her dreadful calamity, wept violently.

But these emotions were too much for her feeble frame to support, and she was seized with fainting fits, which succeeded each other so rapidly, as in a short time to reduce her to the confines of death.

Hortensia now, with feelings of a most complicated nature, flew to M. de Celandelle, to inform him of what had passed; and at the same time that she communicated the joyful intelligence of his daughter's restoration to reason, to impart the dreadful tidings of the improbability of her surviving two hours.

The

The pure soul of Cecilia was not, however, destined so soon to abandon the beauteous frame, of which it had so long been an unconscious inmate. She recovered her health surprizingly fast; and never betrayed the least symptom of derangement of intellect; unless it could be so called, that she never shewed any curiosity concerning the events that had taken place during her insanity.

On the day when she was so felicitously convinced of the existence of her husband, she had explained her situation in such a manner, that no doubt could rest on the mind of Hortensia that she was not her sister, the wife of her beloved brother Edward; but from that period she had never mentioned his
F 2 name,

name, nor did any other person pronounce it in her presence, till the day on which Madame de Polignac's visit terminated, and Mrs. Davenant was to be introduced to the daughter of M. de Celandelle, whom he determined should by degrees be restored to society. He then enquired by what name she would be presented to her visitor?

"By the name I received at the altar!" replied Cecilia, whilst a glow of animated pleasure overspread her fair cheeks: "By the name of Sydney!"

Mrs. Davenant was accordingly introduced to Madame Sydney, when, on the first evening of Madame de Polignac's absence, she attended M. de Celandelle to an apartment adjoining Cecilia's.

Cecilia's bed chamber, and now appropriated to her use.

A more interesting object than the lovely and unfortunate Cecilia now presented, would be difficult to conceive: no remains of her malady now rested on her perfect features but a soft melancholy, which well accorded with the faded delicacy of her person. A good picture of her, taken at that time, would have produced a beautiful representation of pensive resignation in sorrow! A good deal of the same character marked the countenance of Mrs. Davenant also. The dazzling beauty which had fascinated Davenant, and rendered Lord Russel unmindful of the respect, he would in any other case (for his Lordship was not a practiced villain)

have thought due to an unprotected woman; that beauty no affliction could diminish: but that which now preyed on the bosom of Mrs. Davenant, rendered it infinitely more touching; and when (at the request of M. de Celandelle) she led her cherub Eliza into the apartment of Cecilia, that lady was extremely struck by her appearance; nor was Mrs. Davenant less so, with the manners of Cecilia.

After remaining about two hours, Mrs. Davenant (as it was evening) retired to put her little girl to bed, and Cecilia then said to Hortensia, "I am charmed with your beautiful friend, my Hortensia! but I would fain know why she is at Rochelle without Captain Davenant. I observed, that when my father

father spoke of him, the tears flowed down her cheeks, though she endeavoured to conceal them in the neck of her sweet child. Is her husband at sea?"

Cecilia made this enquiry with an earnestness in her manner, which seemed verging towards lunacy, and Hortensia, afraid of irritating her feelings further, replied, "No, at least I believe not."

Cecilia now, with restored calmness asked many questions about the fair Maria; and received from Hortensia some particulars of her former life, such as she had heard them from her friend; and interspersed with them enough of her own story to render Cecilia perfectly acquainted with her present situation.

C H A P. III.

ON the following morning, Mrs. Davenant sent for Hortensia into her room; and presenting her with a large letter or packet, said with a melancholy smile, "May this, my dear Hortensia, convey pleasure to you. My letters inform me, that Davenant's agent does not know to a certainty where he may be. He only knows that he is not at present employed; and believes that he has followed Lord Russel to Nice."

Hortensia was going to attempt condoling

doling with her friend, when she perceived that the direction of her packet was in the hand writing of her brother Edward; and hastily tearing it open, she read the following lines; which from their dates she perceived Edward Sydney had begun to write a few days after he left Europe, and concluded about a week after he had written the last letter she had received from him. j

To Miss SYDNEY.

Taunton-Castle, at Sea—July 21.

‘ Pardon your brother, my dearest
‘ Hortensia, for having been in one
‘ instance a traitor to our friendship,
‘ in concealing from you, circum-
‘ stances, that have determined the
‘ colour of my future days. They
‘ are

‘are black, my sister! dark as the
‘fate that involves the destiny of my
‘lovely suffering wife! Yes, dear
‘Hortensia! of my *wife!* It is three
‘years since your Edward conducted
‘one of the fairest, the most amiable
‘of your lovely sex, to the altar, and
‘they were indissolubly united!

‘The task I have to perform, that
‘of informing you, of the history of
‘our unfortunate love, is a bitter one;
‘but a time may perhaps come, when
‘fortune shall put it in your power
‘to befriend the beloved wife of a
‘brother, to whom she alone is more
‘dear. A time may come, my Hor-
‘tensia, when my Cecilia may be
‘known to you—Oh then, if possible,
‘comfort and console the sweet suf-
ferer:

‘ferer: or if her unconscious spirit
‘still hovers in the incoherency of
‘distraction over the debilitated frame,
‘your attentions, your care of the
‘lovely lunatic, may save her from
‘aggravated evil.

‘You cannot forget my leaving
‘you above three years ago, and
‘performing a voyage to Bourdeaux,
‘though perhaps you may no longer
‘remember the obstinacy with which
‘I combated my father’s wishes in
‘protracting my stay there? But you
‘are still to be informed that my averse-
‘ness to returning to England, arose
from my fond reluctance to leaving a
‘beauteous and idolized wife, in the
‘situation of all others the most in-
‘teresting to a husband——But why
‘do

‘do I thus ramble from my narrative?

‘It was in the house of a widow
‘lady, to whom I had an opportunity
‘of shewing some kindness, that I
‘first saw the admired—the matchless
‘Cecilia de Celandelle. Perhaps my
‘Hortensia may expect an account of
‘the rise and progress of our love;
‘but my sister, your Edward is no
‘stoic! and when the deprivation of
‘happiness stings the human heart to
‘agony, it but serves to lessen its ne-
‘cessary fortitude, to dwell on the re-
‘collection of the treasure it has lost!
‘We were united with the connivance
‘of our widowed friend only; and I
‘believe she was the only person in
‘Bourdeaux who knew that we had
‘ever seen each other: but the reite-
‘rated

‘rated commands of my father, co-
‘operating with the necessity of re-
‘turning to my ship, forced me to
‘abandon this precious treasure!

‘My Cecilia herself fixed the plan
‘of our correspondence, by introduc-
‘ing me to the Chevalier Du Pont,
‘who was the ardent lover of her
‘younger sister, the young and lively
‘Xaviera. This gentleman readily
‘agreed to manage the conveyance of
‘our letters, without the knowledge
‘of M. de Celandelle, my Cecilia’s
father, or my own; who would, I
‘well knew, never forgive me for
‘uniting myself to a catholic.—It is
‘needless to be prolix!—I returned
‘to England, and it was only two
‘months afterwards, that I suffered

‘shipwreck in the vessel I then sailed
‘in; and you cannot forget the report
‘which was circulated that every soul
‘in her had perished.—

August 19.

‘Hortensia when I began this letter,
‘I thought I should have had strength
‘of mind sufficient to give a particular
‘account of times and circumstances
‘that distract me even to think of,

‘It was two years before I returned
‘to Europe, and in that time, what
‘melancholy changes had taken place!
‘—I flew to Bourdeaux!—I sought
‘the habitation of my venerable friend
‘—but her once neat and cheerful
‘dwelling was a heap of hapless ruins,
‘scorched by fire; beneath which her
‘sacred remains, with those of her

‘two

‘two old and faithful servants, were
‘entombed! Shocked, grieved, and
‘half mad with sorrow and disappoint-
‘ment, I went in search of Du Pont,
‘who (thinking me dead) had never
‘written to me; to require from him
‘an account of my Cecilia, for whom,
‘a thousand fears now tormented my
‘breast. I found him not, but I
‘discovered his mother, who imparted
‘to me, in part, the fearful tale that
‘it awaited me to hear.—This was the
‘substance of what I could collect
‘from her reluctant answers to my
‘numerous questions.

‘A short time after I had seen Du
‘Pont, he had journeyed to Rochelle,
‘near which was the residence of M.
‘de Celandelle, the father of his X-

‘viera; who was, from family pique
‘and animosity, the violent opposer
‘of his love for his daughter.

‘Du Pont was a man of honor,
‘but his passions were violent, and
‘their sway was uncontrouled by any
‘delicacy of sentiment or principle,
‘which sometimes supplies the place
‘of that morality, in which he was
‘as deficient as the generality of
‘his countrymen.—At the chateau de
‘Celandelle he contrived frequently
‘and in secret to procure interviews
‘with his mistress! Xaviera was in-
‘nocent, but she was young, artless,
‘tender, and unhappily, frail! Her
‘honor was sacrificed to a man who,
‘till betrayed by the soft weakness of
‘the woman he loved, in his favor,
‘had

had never formed an idea of seducing her from virtue; and the consequences were such as might be expected. M. de Celandelle discovered their intimacy, but not its full extent; and the unhappy Xaviera was torn from the arms of her lover, at the very moment when every thing was arranged for obtaining the sanction of the church to their endearments.

Ever weak-minded—equally depressed in sorrow, as volatile and thoughtless in felicity! As incapable of resisting parental harshness, as the seductions of tenderness and love, in a few months she sunk into the grave; and Du Pont ever impetuous in his resolves, immediately

‘took on him the monastic vows and
‘habit, in a convent near Rochelle.

‘But of the fate of my Cecilia, the
‘mother of Du Pont, was totally un-
‘informed; and from him only could
‘I now hope to hear of her, or of the
‘infant, that I fondly hoped she was
‘impatient to present to me!

‘To Rochelle therefore I went,
‘and soon traced out the residence of
‘Du Pont; from whom I was to hear
‘a tale of complicated misery.—I
‘found him changed almost beyond
‘all remembrance, though little altered
‘in his appearance: his fiery and im-
‘petuous passions, which might from
‘their violence have stimulated him
‘to brilliant, if not noble actions,
‘were sunk into a gloomy austerity,
‘which

‘which knew no active principle but
‘a spirit of revenge, almost diabolical;
‘but where that did not interfere he
‘had learned a stoical apathy, which
‘enabled him to give with calmness
‘the information which wrung to
‘agony every fibre of my heart.

“When,” said Du Pont, “the news
‘of your shipwreck and death was
‘confirmed, I went to the house of
‘your friend Madame de Chiffon,
‘and found her just sealing a letter,
‘which she told me was to convey to
‘your Cecilia the tidings of your un-
‘happy fate. She wept much, and
‘seemed to anticipate the effects the
‘news would have on your wife—but
‘she anticipated not her *own* fate; and
‘that very night she was buried in the
‘smoking

‘smoking ruins of her own habitation.
‘The consequences of that letter were
‘fatal to the infant of whom Madame
‘Sydney was then pregnant; and
‘from that period she has been mad!
‘She is harmless, they tell me, but
‘has totally lost reason and recollec-
‘tion!’

‘Hortensia, such was the situation
‘of the lovely being I had hoped to
‘find, as sensible, as tender and ami-
‘able as when I was forced to aban-
‘don her; but lost, as I now found
‘she was, I was flying to her, when
‘Du Pont, sternly enquiring whither
‘I was going, and learning that I
‘meant to visit the chateau de Ce-
‘landelle, said with a gloomy smile,
“Yes, if you mean entirely to destroy
‘Cecilia,

‘Cecilia, go thither! Present yourself to her parental tyrant—let him repeat what he has so often sworn, ‘that he would sooner stab his daughter with his own hands, than permit her again to see the man who has undone her! and you may then leave him with the consolation that you have rendered him more intolerably cruel than before to your Cecilia.’

‘I could not believe that it was in human nature to be so barbarous; at the same time that I could not assign any reason for Du Pont’s deceiving me in a point intirely inconsequential to him, though so important to my peace. I nevertheless expressed my doubts of what he had told me; and he then frankly offered

‘fered to accompany me to the chateau de Celandelle.

“ You will then” said he “ be convinced that what I have told you of the tyrant’s cruelty, has been rather softened than aggravated.”

‘I could not refuse to accept the offer of Du Pont; and together we walked to the chateau. We were both silent: Du Pont’s emotions, as I could see by the working of his countenance, were those of anger mingled with sullenness!—Hortensia, I fancied I beheld a species of malicious triumph in the glances he shot alternately at me, and at the chateau!

‘When we approached the great gate, Du Pont drew his cowl over his face, I thought to conceal that agitation

‘ agitation which trembled in his altered voice, as he desired to be conducted to M. de Celandelle.

‘ The servant to whom he spoke, bowed submissively, and led us through a long passage to a small study, where sat an old man, whose figure *even to me* appeared calculated to inspire the utmost reverence.

‘ He rose, and after saluting Du Pont, whose face was still concealed from view, bowed to me, and desired we would be seated. “ Yes!” said Du Pont, laying one hand on the shoulder of de Celandelle, whilst with the other he drew aside his own cowl: “ Yes, monster of pride and cruelty, when thou hast restored thy child to the man who fatally loved

‘ her

‘her, and rendered his happiness dependent on the base de Celandelle!’

‘To describe the scene that ensued is impossible; the bitterest reproaches and recriminations were interchanged, with a violence and rancour that rendered them both deaf to my intreaties to be heard, and have my enquiries relative to my poor Cecilia answered.

‘At length, Du Pont drawing a dagger from his bosom held it up, with the point raised to heaven, and with an eagerness that I shall never think of without shuddering, repeated some indistinct words; then turning to M. de Celandelle seemed ready to plunge the weapon in his heart: but though shocked beyond measure

‘measure at what I had witnessed, and
‘inspired as I felt I was by the trem-
‘bling old man before me, I had
‘presence of mind enough to spring
‘on Du Pont, and brought him with
‘myself to the floor; but in the fall,
‘the dagger, which he still held,
‘wounded me in the neck, at the
‘same time lacerating the part so
‘much, that the blood flowed pro-
‘fusely, and almost instantly I lost
‘my sences.

‘When I recovered them, I found
‘myself laid on the mattress of Du
‘Pont, who was sitting on a chair be-
‘side me. I remember his speaking
‘to me, but nothing more, as I again
‘fainted, and was afterwards for ten
‘days in a high fever. On my hap-

‘pily passing the crisis of this, I was
‘forbidden to speak, by the monk,
‘who in capacity of physician attend-
‘ed me; and Du Pont received a
‘strict charge not to answer me, let
‘me ask him what questions I would.

‘This injunction suited well with
‘the gloomy and taciturn humour of
‘Du Pont, and no person could obey
‘it more strictly; nor were any of the
‘rest of the brotherhood suffered to
‘approach me.

‘On the fifteenth day of my ill-
‘ness, Du Pont, who had been some
‘minutes absent, returned to me, and
‘desired me to exert all my strength
‘and instantly to rise. I had already
‘regained much greater vigour, than
‘my physician monk would permit
‘me

“me to employ, and starting up, demanded the meaning of this sudden order. “It is meant,” said Du Pont, “to deliver you from the execution of a *lettre de cachet*, that the miscreant ‘de Celandelle has procured, to imprison you during life in the Bastille. You have therefore no time to lose, and must leave France, before your enemy conceives you have risen from your bed.”

“But my wife—my Cecilia!” I cried—“Should she recover her reason,” interrupted Du Pont, “will find her sorrows infinitely less poignant, from the idea that you are forever enclosed within those gloomy walls, from whence no mortal escapes.”

‘To be brief, my sister, I took his advice, and trusted my safety to flight: yet only by miracle escaped death from the exertions I was forced to make whilst yet unrecov-
ered of my fever.

‘On leaving his convent Du Pont promised to let me hear from him, and when I was last in England, I received a letter from him, stating, that there was the utmost danger in my returning to Normandy, as the *lettre de cachet* still remained in force, and de Celandelle continued unwearied in his search for me.’

August 29.

‘This, my Hortensia, is the sum of my disastrous story; but I have, since yesterday, had some reason to believe

•believe that Du Pont has dealt un-
•fairly by me.

‘There is a gentleman at present
‘on board, who assures me that M.
‘de Celandelle has been unwearied
‘only in his search for the husband
‘of his Cecilia, in the hope that his
‘presence might restore the dear ma-
‘niac! Oh, Hortensia! should this
‘really be true, how happy might
‘your brother find himself, after all
‘his distresses!—Yes—I know that
‘my Cecilia, would recognize her
‘Edward! His tenderness would
‘sooth her woes to sleep, and she
‘would once more be the sensible, in-
‘teresting Cecilia, she was when first
‘I loved her.

‘But I dream, Hortensia!—New-

‘born hope arises in my mind, and
‘it makes me forget that I am now
‘on my voyage to a far distant land,
‘where it must be many, many
‘months before I can hear of those
‘dear to me! And ah! how much
‘longer, before I can return to Eu-
‘rope!—Would that duty and honor
‘would permit me to return in the
‘vessel that conveys this voluminous
‘packet; which will, I hope, con-
‘vince my sister, how much I am her
‘affectionate brother,

‘EDWARD SYDNEY.’

Whilst Hortensia’s eyes ran over this long epistle, she felt a thousand ranging emotions arising in her breast. The sad story of Xaviera affected her, and she

she perfectly recollects, not only the monk, whom she had met one morning in the cemetery, but the touching apostrophe to Du Pont, that burst from the lips of de Celandelle, at the time when he thought Cecilia dead: but as she proceeded in the narrative, her detestation of his character augmented; for she entertained not a doubt that he had imposed a false tale on Sydney, in order to revenge his fancied wrongs on the venerable de Celandelle, by depriving him of the hope of his daughter's restoration to happiness and reason.

Hortensia's first impulse would have led her instantly to carry her packet to M. de Celandelle; but thinking that there were some passages in it, at which he would, in all probability, take offence,

fence, she went to his study, determined only to give him a succinct account of its contents.

When she came to mention the *lettre de cachet*, the countenance of her auditor underwent a sudden change: indignation flashed from his eyes, and forced a glow into his whole face as he exclaimed, "Base, treacherous Du Pont!"

"Can you, dearest Miss Sydney, after all your brother has suffered on my account, deign to hear my justification! I might rather say acquittal. I well remember the circumstance you mention, though at the moment it occurred my soul was too cruelly distracted to observe Mr. Sydney particularly. The sight of the miscreant, who took that opportunity of entering my presence,
annihilated

annihilated every idea, but one, of rage and agonized recollection.

“The last time I had seen him, was at the grave of my poor Xaviera! At the very moment when she was placed in her tomb, Du Pont darted from the midst of the crowd; and I then recollect that it was at this very spot, that I had torn my child from his arms. I cannot think without horror on the execrations he poured forth; or the vows of vengeance he reiterated on me.

“When next, and near a year afterwards, I saw him, his threats, his curses were renewed! Nay, he even attempted my life; and would have succeeded, had not he, who I was unconscious was my son, rescued me, though he received the blow himself. When I went from

the

the chamber, I desired the servants whom I sent thither, to take all imaginable care of the young unknown; but Du Pont refused to be separated from him, and he was by my order conveyed to the convent. Thither, I the next morning, sent to enquire after his health; and received this laconic answer from Du Pont:

“The husband of your Cecilia is dying.”

“Oh God, what did I not feel in perusing those words! To discover the man, so long, and so anxiously sought, within half a league of my house, and to hear that he was expiring, from a wound received in my defence!

“I flew to the convent! I threw myself on my knees by his bed-side! and wildly

wildly conjured him to speak to the father of Cecilia! But reason had entirely forsaken its seat; and he was as totally unable to speak, as Du Pont was perverse in continuing silent to my questions and even my entreaties.

“The monk, who acted as a physician, hearing me speak in a loud voice entered the room and insisted as I valued the life of the patient that I should leave the place; and not return to it without permission. I obeyed; and continued every day to make enquiries for Mr. Sydney; and as constantly heard that his fever had not reached the crisis, till the very day, on which I perceive, Du Pont sent him away by his tale of the *lettre de cachet*. I then went to the convent myself, where I met Du Pont immediately

mediately on my entrance. His countenance wore an air of triumph, when I enquired for my unhappy son.

“Be at peace, old man!” said he, “I have not the heart longer to deceive you. The youth who has this day gone hence, knew not Cecilia, and never even heard her name.”

“Heart-struck by these words, it was with difficulty I supported myself. Du Pont smiled sarcastically, as he said,

“Know you now, what it is to be raised by hope to the summit of felicity; and then to have the promise blasted?”

“Ah! Hortensia!” continued the old man, whilst the tears rolled down his cheeks; “Can you now believe me innocent of any crime against your brother?”

“Dear

"Dear sir," exclaimed Hortensia, as she pressed his hand between both hers; "How can you think that I gave any credence to the falsehoods of Du Pont. But will you indeed pardon my brother for suffering prejudice to influence his conduct, and opinions of you?"

"Youth, my child," replied de Célandelle, "is not the season of cool and impartial judgment; nor is it at any age, that the mind when weakened by sickness, and distracted by anguish, can discriminate so nicely as to detect the subtle deceiver, who vaunts taking an interest in its sorrows."

Hortensia, now, at the desire of her venerable friend, gave him the letter to peruse; and when he had done so, he

asked permission to communicate it to Cecilia.

Hortensia objected: but as she declared she only did so on account of its too much disturbing the fair invalid, M. de Celandelle pressed the point, and she gave it up; though trembling for what might be its effects.

The consequence of this step, was, as might reasonably be concluded, a relapse into insanity: but it was only of short duration; and she was once more entirely restored to reason, and much more collected and cheerful than she had been, from the time of her ill-fated visit to Bourdeaux.



C H A P. IV.

HORTENSIA, now no longer constantly occupied by watching over her unhappy sister, had time to ruminate on her own sorrows; which, however, were often suspended in her endeavours to soothe the deep and settled melancholy of Mrs. Davenant. The noble spirit of that lady seemed totally subdued: the energy of her mind appeared no longer to exist; and she who had once been so steady, and so courageous, was now a prey to all her sex's weakness; and in

embracing her little Eliza, in tears, and in mournful conferences with Hortensia, her time passed away heavily and sorrowful.

One day M. de Celandelle, who took every occasion to endeavour to amuse Mrs. Davenant, whose dejection he perceived, brought her an English newspaper, which he had procured from the captain of a ship lately arrived from England.

She cast her eye carefully over it, and the first words that struck her were these :

“ During the engagement between his Majesty’s frigate——, and the Spanish frigate Santa Maria, the commander of her, Capt. Morley, was confined to his bed by a violent fever, which even incapacitated

tated him from giving orders. The care of the ship therefore devolved on the First Lieutenant, Mr. St. Aubin; and that truly gallant young officer conducted himself with the utmost prudence and bravery, till he received the fatal shot, which deprived the navy of a youth, who promised to become one of its greatest honors.

We hear an elegant monument is to be erected in —— church, to the memory of Mr. St. Aubin, by his only surviving relative, Sir William St. Aubin Marlow, bart. a captain in the British navy."

When Mrs. Davenant had first heard from Hortensia of the death of young St. Aubin, the intelligence had affected her; and the impression had soon worn off. But the perusal of this paragraph, at this period, seemed to give her the most

poinrant affliction; and for several days whenever she was a few moments silent, the tears would burst from her eyes, and the repetition of the name of St. Aubin, would prove from whence they arose.

This appeared entirely incomprehensible to Hortensia, to whom the human heart was as yet slightly known; but to M. de Celandelle, who had studied in the school of affliction, it was by no means so. He was ignorant of the cause of that sorrow which had thus debilitated her mind; but he plainly perceived that it did not originate in the death of the person she seemed to lament.

When the grave closes over a beloved object, sorrow presses heavily on the heart, but it is unaccompanied by anxiety:

iety: and in the grief of Mrs. Davenant there was an agitation, which proclaimed, that though the bright ray of hope was obscured, it had not entirely set.

One morning, about ten days after Mrs. Davenant had read the paragraph regarding St. Aubin in the newspaper, Hortensia entered the room before she was dressed, and calling the little Eliza over to her, sat down beside her friend.

"I have been thinking, Hortensia," said Mrs. Davenant, after a silence of several minutes, "that I can no longer live in the miserable state of uncertainty and sorrow in which I find myself."

"Uncertainty, Madam!" repeated Hortensia; adverting only to the circumstance

cumstance of Lionel's death, and bursting into tears as she spoke.

"Ah Mrs. Davenant, would we could be less than positive."

The tears of Hortensia (the first she had seen her shed on her own account) restored to the mind of Mrs. Davenant all its native energy; and she endeavoured to soothe her friend.

"Hortensia," said she, when Miss Sydney had ceased to weep, "if Davenant was no more, I should not suffer so keenly as I do now. In the consciousness of having fulfilled every duty towards him; and in the certainty that his pure and incorrupt spirit saw and acknowledged my truth, I should feel a satisfaction that would enable me to support his loss with fortitude; nor
by

by fruitless repining injure my own health, so necessary to the care of my children! but now, when I think that he believes me false and abandoned, and judge by my own feelings what he must suffer from so cruel an opinion, my misery is beyond all endurance.

"I will go to Nice!" she added with animation; "I will take my Eliza in search of her mistaken father! She shall plead for me! Her very efforts to speak must move his heart; and he will believe the justification of her mother!"

The unhappy Maria, now suddenly recollecting her poverty, and in that her total inability to put her plan in execution, again gave herself up to all the poignancy of sorrow; and catching her little girl to her bosom wept without control.

Hortensia

Hortensia rose; "she followed her friend to the other end of the room, whither she had removed, and taking her hand, said, in a soft and gentle voice, "You shall go to Nice, my beloved friend, if you hope in that place an alleviation of your distress. See," she added, producing a letter, which contained two English bank notes of considerable value; "I have this morning received the amount of my annuity for the last half year, and the approaching one. Half my income, I always appropriated to the discharge of my obligations to you, of a nature to be repaid; that, therefore is now yours, and you must oblige me by accepting the remainder.

"I am not in debt," she continued,
seeing

feeling Mrs. Davenant about to reject her offer; "I have no immediate want of money, and should any exigence occur, I can apply to you; or (what I should not in the least scruple doing) write to Cecilia for a supply."

It was impossible to resist the artless and affectionate pleadings of Hortensia; Mrs. Davenant embraced her with transport, and descended to the breakfast room, determined to set out the following morning for Nice, accompanied by her friend and Eliza, and attended by the maid of the latter.

Cecilia was now accustomed to breakfast every morning with the family; and had indeed almost universally resumed the government of her father's house. She therefore heard Mrs. Davenant's

venant's declaration, of her intention to leave Rochelle the next day.

Cecilia appeared moved by it, and looking anxiously at Hortensia, seemed to desire an answer to a question she had not courage to ask.

"And my sweet young friend means to accompany Madame Davenant?" said M. de Celandelle.

"Certainly, sir," replied Hortensia.

Cecilia put her hand to her forehead, and resting her elbow on the table, seemed to forget her breakfast; and M. de Celandelle, who never disturbed her in her thoughtful moods, suffered the table to be cleared; when she retired in silence to her apartment.

During the whole of that day the two friends employed themselves in preparations

tions for their journey, which were not completed when they were summoned to dinner. Cecilia did not appear; and M. de Celandelle said she had spent the morning in silence, and particularly seemed to desire to be alone.

At supper the same thing was repeated, and Hortensia then left the table in tears, and ascended to the apartment of Cecilia.

"My dear Cecilia," said she, approaching her; "I hope you are not ill?"

Cecilia raised not her eyes from Perdrix, who lay on the floor at her feet; and made no answer. Hortensia took her hand, (which however she instantly withdrew) saying,

"I fear something afflicts you!"

Still Cecilia would not either speak, or look up.

“Tell me, my dear sister, are you displeased with me? We should not part thus: you know I go to-morrow! Will you not bid me farewell?”

“Farewell!” said Cecilia in violent emotion, and going towards her closet; but before she could shut herself up there, (which was evidently her intention) she sunk on the floor, in one of those convulsion fits that had formerly preceded her loss of reason.

Excessively alarmed, Hortensia called aloud for assistance; and was soon surrounded by all the servants in the chateau, together with Mrs. Davenant and M. de Celandelle.

When the latter beheld the situation
of

of his child, he was extremely affected, and said, "I feared that this would happen! My poor Cecilia! thy feelings are too strong for thee!"

From hence Mrs. Davenant perceived, that her host, thought what was really the case: that the purposed departure of Hortensia had given pain to Cecilia; and that she had forbore to complain, till her uneasiness gaining the better of her judgment, reason had failed her.

Cecilia, when in some measure restored to recollection, raved incessantly of Hortensia's having the cruelty to abandon her; and Mrs. Davenant, who perceived that nothing but her idea of the propriety of her journey, prevented Hortensia from acceding to the touch-

ing petitions of the poor invalid to remain with her; herself proposed leaving her behind at the Chateau de Celandelle.

Hortensia threw her arms round her, and embraced her with grateful pleasure; while Cecilia being at last made sensible that her friend no longer persisted in leaving her, was soon more composed; and consented to her retiring to rest.

But to rest was not the intention of Hortensia. As it was now the middle of June, when most southern climates are subject to extreme heats; and as little Eliza, though a healthy child, was rather delicate, Mrs. Davenant proposed setting out at two o'clock in the morning, that she might have some hours travelling

velling before the sun rose to a height
to make the heat oppressive.

The intermediate time therefore, between twelve and two, was spent by the ladies in melancholy conversation; and when the moment of separation arrived, neither had power to articulate a word. They embraced with tears on both sides, and M. de Celandelle led Mrs. Davenant to the carriage; in which having placed her, and assisted the maid and child to enter, he bade them adieu, and returned to console the weeping Hortensia.

For the first two hours that Mrs. Davenant travelled, she wept almost without intermission; but then the beauty of the country, gilded by the first rays of the sun, attracted her attention;

and for the remainder of the morning, she found amusement in contemplating the various landscapes that surrounded her.

From the place where she stopped to repose, in the heat of the day, she wrote the following letter to Hortensia:

‘I am already advanced many
‘leagues on my journey, and whilst
‘my little girl sleeps beside me, and
‘her maid in the adjoining apartment,
‘I sit down to write to my Hortensia.
‘My heart seems lightened of half the
‘weight that oppressed it, since I have
‘adopted this active measure, in or-
‘der to procure my justification! I
‘feel as if there wanted only my pre-
‘fence to restore my ever dear Da-
‘venant

‘venant to his usual impartial candor!
‘I fancy the villainy of Lord Russel
‘exposed to detestation; and the no-
‘ble heart, into which he entered to
‘be the bane of its peace, shut against
‘him!

‘But I feel, Hortensia, as if some
‘censure might be attached to my
‘conduct in your estimation, from my
‘taking this long, and expensive
‘journey, upon an information so
‘vague, as that conveyed in the
‘agent’s letter. You probably think
‘I should have been wiser if I had
‘written; but, my dear girl, it was
‘impossible for me to ascertain in what
‘company that letter might be re-
‘ceived; or what might be the conse-
‘quences resulting from it. I have
‘every

‘every reason to believe Lord Russel
‘to be sufficiently acquainted with the
‘candid and generous disposition of
‘the man, whom, under the semblance
‘of a friend, he has betrayed, to be
‘certain that if left to himself, he
‘would, perhaps, recal the cruel sen-
‘tence he has pronounced on me; or
‘at least give me a fair and open trial.

‘In all likelihood, then, this per-
‘fidious fiend, is pretty constantly
‘his companion; and if present, when
‘my letter arrived, would have influ-
‘ence enough to render it disbelieved!
‘or if he had not, Hortensia, I must
‘not think of what might follow.
‘But in taking this journey I obviate
‘all inconveniences, (for I will not
‘esteem as such my obligations to
‘you)

‘you) and shall I murmur at the fatigue of body, which promises to restore peace to my mind.

‘I shall not seal this, till I reach Beziers, where I mean to embark, ‘on the Mediterranean, for Nice; and ‘if any thing occurs worthy of notice, ‘I shall inform you of it, when I ‘stop at night.

‘*Beziers.*

‘Thus far, my Hortensia, I have proceeded prosperously: my Eliza has travelled charmingly, without the least fatigue; but poor Ellen has suffered extremely from heat, and the confinement of the carriage, to which she has been so entirely unused. She is too ill to undertake a voyage where she must have the care ‘of

‘of a child; and I myself am totally
‘unequal to attending to Eliza. I
‘must therefore remain at this place
‘some days at least.

‘But could I forget my vexation
‘at being prevented from proceeding,
‘I should say that the environs of Be-
‘ziers are sufficiently beautiful to
‘render a short stay here delightful.

‘For the advantage of Ellen I have
‘left the town, and taken lodgings
‘in a cottage about a mile from it,
‘on the road to Narbonne; where
‘the greater vicinity to the Pyrénées
‘renders the air more temperate than
‘at Beziers. This cottage is like
‘most others in this delightful pro-
‘vince, in the midst of a vineyard;
‘not very large, and joining on one
‘side

‘ side to a multitude of others: but
‘ towards the west, whither I gene-
‘ rally direct my walks, the country
‘ is extremely beautiful; and perhaps
‘ appears the more so from the luxuri-
‘ ant growth of the trees and shrubs,
‘ being contrasted with the stiff and
‘ ungraceful foliage which supports
‘ the vines. As I wander in a ro-
‘ mantic little path that leads along
‘ the side of a steep declivity, the Me-
‘ diterranean in my view, blue, smil-
‘ ing and tranquil; and when going
‘ round the hill, which forms one of
‘ the headlands of the bay in which
‘ Narbonne stands, and cast my eye
‘ over the vast extent of ocean be-
‘ tween me and the object of my pain-
‘ ful journey, I sigh at the too proba-
‘ ble

‘ble chance of a disappointment to my
‘hopes. A stout peasant girl be-
‘longing to the village, accompanies
‘me in my rambles to take care of
‘the child; whilst the good woman
‘herself attends on Ellen.

‘I have been three days here, and
‘still no prospect of leaving it: I al-
‘ready begin to grow weary of my
‘confinement; and feel some portion
‘of Sterne’s sickness of the heart, a-
‘rising from hope deferred.

‘As I was taking my usual walk,
‘this evening, along the side of the
‘wood crowned hill, I mentioned to
‘you, I was much surprised by the
‘appearance of a stranger. He was a
‘young man of elegant appearance,
‘and

‘and his dress was English; though
‘after he passed me, I observed him
‘to stop Jeanette, who had my child
‘in her arms, and address Eliza in
‘French; but happening to see me
‘waiting for them to come up, he
‘kissed the little one and departed.’

‘My dear Hortensia, I was not
‘mistaken in regard to the stranger
‘whom I encountered this evening:
‘he has found out who I am, and has
‘sent me the following billet:

‘To Mrs. DAVENANT.

‘Sir William St. Aubin Marlow
‘presents his most respectful compli-
‘ments to Mrs. Davenant; and
‘though personally a stranger, hopes
‘she will not esteem it impertinent if
‘he petitions to be favoured with per-

‘mission to wait on her for half an hour.’

‘I have returned an answer to this note, expressing a wish to see him, and expect him every moment: I must therefore take leave of you for the present.’



C H A P. V.

WHEN Mrs. Davenant's visitor was announced, and he paid her his compliments, she was as much struck by his manners, as she had before been by his appearance.

His figure was thin, but though very tall, his air might well be distinguished by a more striking epithet than genteel: it was at once graceful and dignified. His countenance, also, was of a kind to attract the attention of the beholder:

his complexion was of a mahogany darkness, and his eyes were large, black, and penetrating; but though his features were strongly marked, the contour was far from displeasing.

Such were the observations of Hortensia on the naval officer whose conduct had occasioned her so much perplexity; and exactly similar were those of Mrs. Davenant; as Sir William, in the politest manner imaginable, apologized for his intrusion, by saying, "I look upon every woman (particularly in a foreign country) to have the most indubitable claim to my attention and services; but when added to that circumstance, is the powerful attraction of Mrs. Davenant's name, (a name, long known and reverenced by me, from the virtues of

the

the lady who bears it) I even risk the chance of being thought impertinent, to lay claim to her notice and esteem."

"I know not," Mrs. Davenant returned, "how I came to have the good fortune to be known to you; but believe me, Sir William, I feel the sincerest pleasure, in thus meeting with a person, whose character I have always justly appretiated."

Amongst people, who, to good breeding, unite a knowledge of the world, acquaintances are not long in forming; and a quarter of an hour had scarcely elapsed, before Mrs. Davenant and the baronet, were perfectly at ease with each other.

"I am much mistaken," said Mrs. Davenant, suddenly recollecting Hor-

tenia's adventure with the naval stranger at Rochelle: "I am much mistaken, if I (or rather a friend who was under my protection) have not, for a long space of time, had the honor to be the object of Sir William Marlow's guardianship."

Sir William bowed in silence, and Mrs. Davenant continued; "Whatever might have been the cause of your so attentively watching over the safety of Miss Sydney, the effect was calculated to inspire the most lively gratitude."

At the mention of Miss Sydney, a deep blush was perceptible, even on the dark cheek of Sir William; and he hastily returned:

"I doubt, madam, Miss Sydney looked on the matter in a different light!"

To

To herself, I owe the mortifying information that my silent guardianship had irreparably injured her peace."

"Will you take my word, Sir William, that you are under a most egregious mistake? Or is it necessary that, to convince you of it, I should relate circumstances (except in that single instance) totally unimportant for you to know."

"I should be sorry, madam," returned the Baronet, "to enquire more of your's or Miss Sydney's situation, than is agreeable to you to tell me; but trust me, I feel too much gratified in the idea that Hortensia has not suffered by my, perhaps, imprudent conduct, not to hold it firmly till compelled to relinquish it."

There

There was something in the animated manner in which Sir William made this declaration that was almost a confirmation of what she had suspected, when she heard of his conversation with her young friend, and perused the lines of de Florian written in his pocket book ; which, however deserving of notice they might be from their native merit and elegance, were all at least *as likely* to be copied from sentiment as taste.

“Would it be fair,” enquired Mrs. Davenant smiling, “if whilst I put *your* curiosity under the cruel restraint of silence, I were to desire satisfaction of *my own*; and intreat you to tell me, whence arose that interest in Miss Sydney which you so fondly cherish, though entirely unknown to her.”

“That

"That I am entirely unknown to *her*," replied Sir William, "is, though owing to myself, my misfortune; and can I consider it in any other light, (situated as she is) that *she* is but too well known to *me*. But you have a right, madam, to my confidence; and however inimical it may be to that oblivious repose that I aught to court, I will briefly inform you of the whole rise and progress of that attachment to your lovely friend, which is, I fear, destined to remain for ever as hopeless, as when my amiable rival was in existence.

"It is now about five years since the ship to which I belonged was ordered to the East Indies; and I accordingly visited the coast of Bengal, where we were to be stationed. As my duty did not require

require my constant attendance on board my ship, I was very much at the house of a gentleman of fortune and consequence, to whom my family and connexions were well known. In one of those visits, I happened to dine in company with a person, who seemed in a wretched state of health; and who, though he wore a British uniform, appeared to be considered in the light of an inferior by the whole company. The observation that he was so, at the same time that his military garb and elegant manners proclaimed him a gentleman, induced me to pay him more attention than I should have done, had I seen him treated with that distinction, which appeared to be only his desert. During the course of the day we had much conversation,

conversation, and I found him as well informed, as he was evidently unfortunate; and on his leaving the house where I was to stay a few days longer, I made many enquires concerning him. I found that his name was Sandford; that he had belonged to the —— regiment which he had left a short time before, on its returning to Europe; and as he had only been a lieutenant, his circumstances were rather distressed.

“ This account did not by any means lessen my desire to know more of this interesting young man; and I employed all the address I was master of, to procure an intimacy with him, which, he sedulously avoided for a considerable time. At length, however, I overcame his reluctance to letting me share his confidence

fidence and friendship; and by the application of a very little interest, and still less money, I procured him an establishment, that rendered his circumstances easy. But it was not till an hour before his death, which happened two years after I first knew him, that I was made acquainted with his unhappy story. He then told me, that his real name was Sydney ; and that he was the eldest son of Captain Sydney, the father of young Hortensia.

“ From a circumstance rather afflictive than disgraceful, he was estranged from the regards of his father ; he had changed his name, and his situation forbade his ever returning to Europe, without incurring the danger of an ignominious death.

“ It

"It is now eleven years," said the unfortunate Mr. Sydney, "since my very existence has been unknown to my own family; or if my father suspects it, his curses follow every thought of me: but I could not live in ignorance of them; and in the course of my enquiries for my half brothers and sister, I have learnt that the youngest of the former lost his life in a voyage to India; and that the elder is in the service of Sweden. What then, in case of my father's death, (an event which I perhaps have hastened) is to become of my sister? she whom, I left at five years of age, one of the most lovely and interesting children I ever beheld. I know she must be poor! and unless fate has exhausted all its malignity on her wretched brother, I

fear she will be too much exposed to misfortune! Can you then, Marlow," he added, pressing my hand in his cold one, "Can you for the sake of a man who you compelled to call himself your friend, undertake the guardianship of this young creature? She is beautiful; at least so I have heard from the only person who has ever discovered my real name and situation; and when she died, she left me his locket, which contains my poor Hortensia's hair. On you, Marlow, I now bestow it, and never part with it, unless you shall find my sister averse to, or unworthy of your guardianship!" "My unhappy friend," Sir William continued, "particularly requested me not to mention his name to Miss Sydney unless she did to me,

from

from an idea that she had been taught to detest his memory; and I unfortunately promised: unfortunately, since it prevented me from avowing a guardianship, to which I could prove no right.

“In a few moments after his speaking to me, Mr. Sydney expired, at the age of thirty-three, a victim to hopeless sorrow and repentance.

“On my return to England, about a year ago, I made every enquiry for the family of Captain Sydney, whom I found to be dead; and heard his daughter resided at Russelstown, with you and Captain Davenant. I also heard that my young relation, Lionel St. Aubin, was the friend, not only of both the protectors of Miss Sydney, but herself;

and in a conversation I had with him, in London, a few days previous to his sailing for the West Indies, I extracted the secret from him, that he was beloved by my sweet charge.

"I had thus an additional incentive to watch over her, and accordingly hastened to the neighbourhood of Ruffelstow. There (I doubt not she has informed you) I used, whenever the tide would permit, to come to the habitation where she dwelt, and walk for hours under her window. But madam, shall I confess, that it was hopeless love, more than a desire to acquit myself of my promise to my deceased friend, that induced me to hover round the abode of Miss Sydney: I had seen her, frequently seen her, only the more to regret

regret that she was removed from my hopes, by her attachment to my relation. In France, as I had been in England, I was constantly near her; and there I first ventured to speak to her; but her anxious enquiry if the vessels we saw passing were the West India fleet, reminded me that she loved, and warned me, that I had better not seek an intimacy with her, since it could only tend to the destruction of my peace."

Sir William thus concluded a tale, with the principal part of which Mrs. Davenant was already acquainted; as the unfortunate affair for which Mr. Henry Sydney suffered so severely, was too public not to be known to her, had not the principal actress in it been her relation. It was briefly this.

Mr. Sydney had, at about the age of twenty two, fallen desperately in love with a young lady, then at a boarding school; though already past her seventeenth year. He had persuaded her to elope with him; but they were overtaken by her friends before their marriage was celebrated, but not before Mr. Sydney had been invested in all the rights of a husband. The young lady was forced from her lover, against whom a prosecution was immediately commenced; which the unhappy girl, conscious of guilt, and weighed down by shame, had not resolution enough to put a stop to, by avowing the voluntary part she had taken in the elopement and its consequences; and there was little doubt of Mr. Sydney's being (if taken) sentenced to die; at the time

when a friend, who was conscious of his comparative innocence, procured him, under the name of Sandford, a commission in a regiment serving in the East Indies. The young lady, who had been the fatal cause of all his misfortunes, died in giving birth to a dead infant; and though she, in her last moments, solemnly declared herself, and not Mr. Sydney to be in fault, her decease rendered her uncles yet more inveterate against that gentleman; and they left no scheme untried to discover if he still lived, and to bring him to condign punishment.

When Sir William Marlow had concluded his narrative, Mrs. Davenant thanked him in the most obliging terms; but added with a smile, half benovolent,

half

half arch: "Yet your story, Sir William, does not bring me any proof that your partiality for my amiable young friend, is destined to remain as hopeless as when my dear Lionel St. Aubin was in existence."

"Ah madam," returned the Baronet, "how can I flatter myself with a contrary idea? Does she not still think on him, with unabated tenderness? Does she not—"

"Already consider you as a friend?" interrupted Mrs. Davenant. "And is not that sufficient ground on which your generous attachment may build hopes? I give you my honor, Sir William, that I have neither directly, or indirectly mentioned this subject to Hortensia, whom I love with all a sister's fondness;

fondness; yet I have drawn conclusions very much to your advantage. Though fondly attached to Lionel, it is not at her age that love or grief can be permanent! The latter at first extinguishes the former, and then expires of itself."

Sir William was exceedingly surprised at the frankness of Mrs. Davenant, and even ventured to hint to her, that he was so; but that lady had too much sense to be offended at it, and said, with additional freedom, and a fascinating sweetness:

"I am not surprised, my good sir, at the sentiment I find I have inspired; but I cannot consider you as one of those presuming boys, that must be kept in ignorance of the avenues to a woman's heart. Your character is too

well

well known to me, for me not to wish with the utmost sincerity that you may be able to teach my beloved Hortensia, “The hardest lesson, to forget!” and that you may enjoy all the happiness that the possession of a heart like hers can bestow.”

Sir William, with more warmth than might be thought by many persons becoming in a sage gentleman in his thirty-seventh year, thanked his fair companion for her good opinion and kind wishes, but added:

“Would to heaven, my dear Mrs. Davenant, that Miss Sydney would be persuaded to think as you do.”

“I perceive,” said Mrs. Davenant laughing, “that in all stations, countries and ages, you men are alike unreasonable,

able, and inconsistent, when once your hearts become possessed by the little blind deity : it is like jealousy, which finding a want of substantial evidence, feeds its torments on absurdities, and contradictions the most incoherent."

Mrs. Davenant's voice sunk into a tone of the deepest melancholy as she pronounced the last observation; she sighed, and could not repress the tear that started to her eye. Whether the baronet observed it, or not, is doubtful; but he certainly from that moment seemed to think more of Maria, than of Lionel St. Aubin, or even of Hortensia.

The conversation continued with less spirit and interest upon different subjects, till Sir William thought it proper

to retire; he then said to Mrs. Davenant,

"I have been too certain, madam, from my first seeing you here, that you waited at Beziers for Captain Davenant, to mention my expectation of seeing him at that place to-morrow——"

"Gracious powers! exclaimed Mrs. Davenant, thrown off her guard by this intelligence: "Davenant at Beziers to-morrow! Tell me, I entreat you, sir, comes he alone?"

Whatever conclusions Sir William Marlow might be led to draw from the first part of his fair friend's exclamation; the latter part, though it might not confute them, demanded an answer: he replied, that Captain Davenant would be accompanied only by the young Earl of Orland, an English nobleman, with whom

whom he had become intimate at Nice ; where Sir William had made an acquaintance with both gentlemen, soon after he left Rochelle.

At the mention of the Earl of Orland, Mrs. Davenant recollect^{ed} that title to belong to a relation of her own ; who, though a wild and dissipated young man, was far from being unamiable ; and was always esteemed a man of the nicest honor, and of the most friendly disposition. She therefore derived some satisfaction from the idea of meeting him ; and making a hasty apology to Sir William, she entreated him not to mention her name to Captain Davenant ; and if possible, to detain him at Beziers for some hours. She bade her guest good night, in the utmost agitation, and re-

tired to her room, to weep over the little Eliza—to press her to her heart, and to pray for a happy termination to the eventful interview of the morrow.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

MRS. Davenant waited with the most anxious solicitude till the hour, when she learned, by a short billet to Sir William Marlow making the enquiry, that Davenant was to arrive at Beziers; and she sent a note to request to see him immediately at the farm house where she lodged. As she was well aware that he would never come knowingly, to *her*, she couched her billet in the most ambiguous terms, and wrote it not only in

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a feigned hand, but in the French language.

As she had expected, Davenant accompanied her messenger back to her, and she was prepared to receive him, with his own and Lord Ruffel's letter open on the table beside her, and her little Eliza playing on the floor at her feet.

The moment her husband entered the room, she sprung towards him, and he almost mechanically received her in his arms; but with a recollective coldness, that wounded her still more cruelly than it would have done at first, he turned from her; and almost overcome by the tortures his heart endured, he threw himself into a chair.

In vain did his lady entreat him to
hear

hear her justification: he answered her only by a repulsive motion of his hand, and continued silent, and averted. At length, taking her child in her arms, she brought her to her father, and would have placed her on his knee; but he snatched the little girl from her, with almost frantic eagerness, saying, “Ill-fated, unhappy Maria, I wish not to distress you; for my heart feels an additional, and severe pang, when I declare that I must deprive you of this infant, apparently so beloved! Poor innocent! I thought not of her, when I took a last farewell of her devoted mother.”

In despite of the hardy resolution of Captain Davenant, tears followed each other in quick succession from his eyes,

as he said this; and Mrs. Davenant seizing the moment of softness, very soon informed him of his error, to which they had both nearly fallen victims. Davenant might not perhaps, be perfectly convinced; but he could not withstand the pleadings and tears of an adored wife, and the innocent carresses of his child, who was interested in his favor by the warmth of those embraces he lavished on her, at the very moment when he was deaf to the entreaties of the mother.

He was, however, at length prevailed upon to hear reason; and on the appearance of Sir William Marlow, for whom Mrs. Davenant sent, and who acknowledged himself to be the person whose nocturnal rambles had afforded

some

some colour to the cruel tale of Lord Russel, he no longer doubted. Mrs. Davenant prudently forbore to mention to her husband the cause of Lord Russel's enmity to her; but in the falsehoods he had uttered regarding her, Davenant had ample cause for vengeance, were not his lordship now in a state that forbid his calling him out.

Shortly after his arrival at Nice, Lord Russel had been seized with a violent fever, which departing, left him in such a state of weakness, as brought on one of those rapid decays, which usually terminate the existence in a few weeks.

The young Earl of Orland, who joined the once more happy Davenants and Sir William at the farm-house, appeared to Mrs. Davenant in a state of health,

health, that rendered a similar fate to Lord Ruffel's, reasonably expected; and on enquiry, from her husband, learned, that the Earl had drank too freely with some English friends, on the night before they left Nice; which, conspiring with travelling, rendered him extremely hot and feverish the next day. At the place where they stopped to dine, however, the Earl eat heartily, particularly of fruit, which Captain Davenant thought extremely proper for him; and after dinner he retired, as he said, to sleep for a short time. On his joining his fellow traveller in the carriage, when they were to continue their journey Captain Davenant remarked that he was exceedingly pale, and shivered to a violent degree; and at length induced him

to

to confess, that he had been bathing, instead of sleeping after dinner.

The consequences of this imprudence, were as Mrs. Davenant from the first expected, a cold and violent fever, during which she attended him with the utmost care, and tenderest solicitude; owing to which (as his physician declared) was his recovery from an illness, that generally proves fatal to persons unaccustomed to such excesses.

But it could not be expected that Sir William Marlow would remain at Beziers, the whole of the six weeks, that Captain and Mrs. Davenant spent there, with their young kinsman. Before Lord Orland's disorder became serious, he had set out for Rochelle, charged with letters from Mrs. Davenant to Hortensia;

Hortensia; calculated, not only to introduce him to her, but to inspire the most favorable sentiments of him.

When he arrived at the Chateau de Celandelle it was evening; and he learned from the servants, that their master, and the ladies, had walked towards the harbour. Though he could not understand who the ladies were, (as Mrs. Davenant had not mentioned Cecilia) he followed them; and on the very spot, where he had first spoken to Hortensia, he beheld them standing. Though a lover, Sir William could not, notwithstanding his mistress was present, refrain from giving his first attention to Cecilia, as he approached the group. Her tall and slender form, was dressed in white, over which her fine dark hair flowed;

flowed, the sport of the evening breeze, that blew it about her shoulders, and her beautiful face. She wore neither hat or cap, but whilst one arm rested on that of Hortensia, the other hand was perpetually employed in efforts to confine her luxuriant tresses.

Hortensia's figure, though too small for dignity, had yet so much grace in it, that she appeared to advantage even beside her beautiful friend: her dress was simple, and entirely black; as was the beaver hat and feathers that concealed a part of her face, and of her long curling hair. M^s, de Celandelle stood on the other side of Cecilia, and appeared to gaze on her with the fondest rapture.

Hortensia was speaking, when Sir William

William advanced to them. She was the first to perceive him, and blushing unconsciously, hesitated, forgot what she was saying, and was silent. The baronet certainly experienced a sensation of pleasure, in observing her confusion; which evidently increased, when M. de Celandelle presented him to her, by his proper name; as he afterwards did to Cecilia.

The fair Cecilia had for some time been accustomed to walk out in an evening, and always supported by the arm of her father; which she did not, during their return to the chateau, relinquish; and as the path was narrow, Hortensia and Sir William were obliged to follow. He took that opportunity of presenting Mrs. Davenant's letter to her; which

she

she calmly put into her pocket, saying, "I too, sir, have something to deliver, or rather restore to you, which I shall take the first opportunity of presenting to you."

Sir William could not be ignorant that she meant his pocket book; but as he did not at that moment recollect the notes that it contained, he was pleased at the proposed restoration, that he might once more have the hair in his possession; or if she had taken it out, have a plea for asking her for it.

When the party returned to the house, and whilst they were taking their coffee, the conversation was as usual, owing to the attendance of servants, frivolous and constrained. Cecilia, whose unhappy malady was not yet so entirely sub-

dued, as to enable her to display that easy gracefulness of manner, that once so eminently distinguished her, and which even now rendered her so fascinating when only in the circle of her own family, was restless and gloomy, and retired the moment she could do so with propriety, followed by Hortensia, who was impatient to peruse Mrs. Davenant's letter.

But Hortensia, though she most truly rejoiced in the restored felicity of her friend, derived not for herself much comfort from the perusal of an epistle which recommended a lover, at the time when her heart was torn by sorrow for the still recent death of the man on whom she had fixed her fondest affections.

Hortensia

Hortensia now felt an inconsistency in herself for which she could by no means account; and which tempted her very often to arraign herself for a capricious temper, which she despised in others. Before Mrs. Davenant's departure she had given so little thought to her own griefs, that they scarcely seemed to exist, except when her mind was roused to recollection by some circumstance that bore a particular, or implied relation to them; but since she had been left chiefly alone with Cecilia, who would sometimes not utter a word for several hours, she had thought on Lionel St. Aubin almost without ceasing; and the remembrance was generally bedewed with her tears: yet no sooner did the appearance of a stranger break in

upon the insipid monotony of her life, than the active principle of animated curiosity superseded that of sorrow.

She was delighted with the prospect of seeing and knowing a character she so much reverenced and admired as Sir William Marlow; but her heart whispered her that she must bid adieu to all hopes of an unrestrained and friendly intercourse with him, the moment she read the passage in the letter of her friend, which seriously recommended him to fill up the place of his young relation in the heart of her dear Hortensia.

She felt averse to going down to supper; yet dreaded that her declining to do so, would give Sir William some suspicion of the subject of the letter he had brought her. She therefore descended

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ed the stairs to the library, where the gentlemen were seated; and where, to her infinite relief, the servants were laying the cloth for supper.

On her entrance Sir William arose, and expressing his pleasure at again seeing her, when he feared she had retired for the night, placed a chair for her between his own and de Celandelle's; but Hortensia, scarcely knowing why she did so, declined his attention by a slight curtsey, and passing on to a distant seat. Sir William, in despite of his complexion, coloured perceptibly high; and hurt by her manner, he felt too much discouraged to attempt to converse with her: but he could not renew the discourse her entrance had interrupted, with his host, and was therefore totally silent.

De Celandelle left his seat, and advancing to the high chimney piece near which Hortensia sat, leaned against it, whilst he gazed on her face with a benevolent earnestness, that, had she observed it, would have convinced her Sir William had made him the confidant of his schemes and wishes.

She at length looked up; and de Celandelle, ashamed of having done a rude thing, endeavoured to recollect himself, and said:

“Cecilia I conclude, appears no more to night”

Hortensia assented, adding that she was already asleep.

Supper was now brought in; and so completely absent or confused was the fair Hortensia, that she was retiring to her

her room without any further ceremony, when the baronet arrested her progress:

"You surely are not so cruel," he said in a low voice, "as to tantalize us with the promise of your company at supper, and then to leave us to ourselves?"

Hortensia attempted to make a careless reply, but failed; and feeling that she must either answer Sir William, or remain, she preferred the latter, and began to draw a chair towards the table, without perceiving that the servants had already placed three at it. The baronet observing it, led her towards one of them; and de Celandelle, then leaving his post at the chimney, with an air of recovered recollection, took his seat at the table; where, after supper was removed,

moved, a conversation took place between him and his new guest, which being at once amusing and instructive, fully entertained Hortensia till it was time to retire to repose; when the party reluctantly separated.

In the morning, Hortensia took care not to be first in the breakfast room; for though she wished to restore Sir William his pocket book, she chose to trust to chance for an opportunity of doing so; and therefore did not leave her chamber, till after Cecilia quitted hers.

The baronet still remembered the repulsive coldness of Hortensia's conduct on the preceding night; and though it was not in his nature to see a woman enter the room where he was, without rising to accommodate her, yet even

she

she observed a total absence of that animated interest, that seemed to have at first prompted his gallantry. She, however, was cautious to avoid shewing any of that caprice, which she blushed to have exhibited the semblance of the night before; but Sir William, after placing a seat for her at the opposite side of the table from that from whence he had arisen, and paid her the compliments of the morning, did not again address her during the breakfast.

Hortensia was sorry for it, as it rendered her task of speaking to him about his pocket-book more difficult; but on M. de Celandelle leaving the room, and Cecilia shortly afterwards retiring, she stepped up to the table, at which he still sat, and laying the book before him,

was

was going away, when he took her hand, saying with a smile, "This has been so long in your possession, Miss Sydney, that I think it well to examine if the contents remain as I placed them?"

Hortensia, blushing, replied, she believed they did.

"And how shall I thank you, for permitting them to be so?" said the baronet, as he was seeking for the locket.

"Certainly, sir," replied Hortensia, with a blush rather indignant than timid: "You cannot suspect me of interfering with that, which I well knew did not belong to me."

From this answer, Sir William perceived she was ignorant of the cause of his prizeing the lock of hair so highly, and it increased his reluctance to permitting

mitting her to leave the room, as she still desired to do; though he could scarcely resolve to tell her, what might probably deprive him of what was so dear to him: but when, at last, his candor gaining the victory over his fears and wishes, he told her from whose head it had been taken, she calmly took the locket out of his scarcely yielding hand, and unclosing it, took from thence the hair, saying as she did so:

“Sir William, you will not be surprised at my doing this, when you reflect on——how little possible right you can have——”

Hortensia again hesitated, and the baronet said: “My right to it, Miss Sydney, is sacred at least, if not incontrovertible. It was the last parting gift
of

of an expiring friend, and had been bequeathed to him by one who was sensible of the value he would set on it. Will you then, madam; can you deprive me of this only pledge of the friendship of the unfortunate Sandford?"

"Sandford!" repeated Hortensia, whilst tears stood in her eyes; and she actually kissed, with all the fervency of affection, the lock of hair which she still held in her fingers.

"I perceive," said Sir William, "that you were not unacquainted with my friend."

"Your friend, Sir William! Your friend!" repeated Hortensia again, her cheeks glowing as she spoke: "Ah my poor brother! I knew not you had been so fortunate."

There

There was an unaffected softness in this almost unconscious compliment of the fair Sydney, that reached the heart of Sir William, and sprung to his eyes: worlds would he have given to press to his lips the white hand that rested on the back of his chair; (for truth to say, Sir William still remained seated, though the most lovely woman, as he thought, in the world was yet standing) but he knew that the least suspicion of his attachment, given by his conduct, would enchain the heart he so much wished to possess in that frigid reserve which would crush all his hopes.

He still however pressed her to restore him the hair, which she refused to do, till acquainted with the means by which he had become so very dear to

her brother, as his leaving him such a gift seemed to proclaim.

Sir William readily satisfied her, but omitted some things that he had told Mrs. Davenant, and added some others that he had *not* told her; the principal of which was to account for the 200*l.* contained in the pocket-book, which he declared to be the produce of Mr. Sydney's post, and which he had been permitted to sell for the benefit of his family. In this the baronet certainly departed a little from truth: but what man, let his sense of honor be ever so nice, will not do so, when it is necessary in order to place a lovely young woman, whom he loves, but who loves not him, in a state of happy independance?

At the conclusion of his relation,
Hortensia

Hortensia surrendered up the contested lock in silence, which the baronet, having first kissed, and then put in the locket, deposited it in his waistcoat pocket, waiting only till he was out of Hortensia's sight, to place it in a dearer position.

C H A P. VII.

FOR near three weeks, which now passed cheerfully at least, if not gaily, over the heads of the inhabitants of the Chateau de Celandelle, Sir William, though he paid Hortensia an attention so watchful as to be almost tender, never mentioned the subject of love to her; though a person even less conversant with human nature than the baronet might have easily seen that it would not be totally disrelished by her. But certain

tain it is, that those men who are the most clear-sighted in every other respect, are very frequently the most unaccountably blind to the symptoms and effects of the tender passion.

About this time a letter arrived from Mrs. Davenant, informing Hortensia of the convalescence of the young Lord Orland; and of another event, which gave her the most lively pleasure. Lord Russel was no more; and recollecting a relationship direct, though distant, to the family of Davenant, had made a will entirely in favour of Captain Davenant; saying expressly, that as he was himself well convinced that that gentleman was his heir-at-law, he wished to spare *him* the expence of a suit in prosecuting his right, and his other relations the morti-

fication of having property wrested from them, which they had once possessed.

“In this,” said Sir William, when he heard of the bequest; “In this Lord Russel has acted with a delicacy worthy of the amiable, interesting youth, I remember him to have been, before a fatally cherished attachment choaked those luxuriant shoots of virtue, that promised to render him an honor to his country.”

“Poor Russel!” the baronet added with a sigh, “a too strong admiration of the writings of Petrach and Sterne were his bane. From admiring their writings, the transition was too easy, first to commiserating, and then to approving the sentiments, which gave birth to those beautiful effusions of genius and taste.”

Hortensia, whom not even the tender
regrets

regrets of Sir William, could induce to think with any thing less than abhorrence of Lord Russel, enquired how he had acted with any peculiar delicacy in this affair; and the baronet replied:

“That the relationship between the families of Russel and Davenant exists, is certain; but assure yourself, Miss Sydney, it is not one that would be admitted in a court of justice. Lord Russel’s right of disposing of his property as he pleased, is, however, incontrovertible.”

A day or two after this news arrived at the chateau, as Hortensia was walking with Cecilia in a part of the grounds, at a small distance from the cemetery, and directly between that and the neighbouring monastery, they were met by

a man

a man in the habit of a monk, whom, till he raised his cowl a little in the action of saluting her, Hortensia did not recognize, as the same she had once seen in the cemetery, and who, she had so good a reason to suppose, was the treacherous and vengeful Du Pont.

He was paler, and much thinner than he had been, when she first saw him: despair sat on every feature, and his fine eyes, at that time so mild, and even heavy; now, at one moment glared with the frenzy of internal torments, and the next, seemed deluged with the tears of remorse, which yet refused to flow down his haggard cheek, to relieve the knawing misery that preyed incessantly on his heart.

So altered as he now was, from the
time

time when she knew him the suitor of her sister, it is not wonderful that Cecilia did not recollect him; but there was a something in the character of his countenance, that seemed to make an impression on her; for her hand trembled as with a heavier pressure she leant it on the arm of Hortensia; and her feet appeared rooted to the earth, as she said in an agitated voice,

“Who is that?”

Du Pont was little less affected than Cecilia: he too trembled and stood still, as he fixed an ardent gaze on her face; then without saying a word he dashed himself on the ground, rolled in the dust, and uttered imprecations so dreadful, as only insanity could prompt.

Both the fair friends knelt beside him:

Hortensia,

Hortensia, endeavouring to soothe; and Cecilia, almost unconsciously trying to raise him up: her efforts displaced his upper garment, and his bare shoulders being exposed, exhibited a sight horrid to humanity. They were gored, and lacerated by scourges in such a manner, that the flesh seemed to have been torn from the bones; and his arms plainly bore the marks of the sharp pavement on which he had lately accustomed himself to lye, in spots black, and almost putrid.

What a sight was this for the gentle, the piteous Cecilia! Torrents of tears fell from her eyes, and as they bathed his yet bleeding wounds, “Du Pont!” she exclaimed, in an accent almost as frantic as his own, “Du Pont! beloved
of

of the ill-fated Xaviera! why is this? Oh! why is the form so adored by her, thus mangled? Why, why, this despair?"

Du Pont made no reply, but he ceased to beat himself upon the earth, and sinking into a sort of stupor, he was for some minutes totally incapable of recollection, or exertion: but suddenly springing from the ground, with a cry which might rather be denominated a howl, he darted from the affrighted friends, and was seen no more.

When Du Pont was gone, Cecilia and Hortensia gazed on each other for some moments in silence, only broken by the deep sighs of the former.

"Ah!" cried she at length, "miserable man! surely thy penitence will arise to the throne of mercy! Heaven will forgive

forgive thee, as I have done, for causing the death of Sydney."

With inexpressible concern Hortensia received this new proof that the intellects of her unhappy sister-in-law, gave but little promise of being ever entirely restored; and she hung on the idea of her brother's arrival, as the only event that it seemed probable would prevent her mind from recurring, whenever it was disturbed, to the idea of his death.

It was not long after this distressing meeting, that Captain and Mrs. Davenant, with Eliza, and the young Earl their relation, arrived at Rochelle, in their way to England; and were all prevailed upon by M. de Celandelle to spend a week at the chateau. During that time Hortensia was as careful in shunning

shunning Mrs. Davenant's company, as she had heretofore been in seeking it. But though that lady was thus prevented from learning what progress the baronet had made in the heart of her friend, she found from himself that, though more passionately in love than ever, he had but little expectation of rendering himself agreeable to Hortensia.

At the time when the voyage to England was talked over, on the night of the Davenants arrival at the chateau, the departure of Hortensia with them was treated as a thing of course; and the baronet said that he also would accompany them, as his affairs demanded his return to his native country.

The once placid cheerfulness of the fair Sydney had now sunk into a spirit-

less dejection, which made her passively agree to return to England; and also, when warmly pressed by Cecilia and her father, to remain with them, consenting to do so, with much less solicitation than Mrs. Davenant thought *aught* to have influenced her to change her resolution. That lady was so entirely in the interest of Sir William, that she was provoked at Hortensia's insensibility to the pleasure of enjoying his company during her journey and voyage, and was too much hurt at the change of measures to mention it to him; whilst the rest of the party concluding he knew it, contributed to keep him in ignorance by their silence on the subject.

From the constant, and even of late increased coldness of Hortensia, Sir William began to think that it behoved

him to consider what he was about, whilst he thus pursued a woman, whose affections he was probably destined never to share; and the result of these considerations, was a sudden determination on the night before he was to have departed for England, to remain some time longer at the chateau.

It was proposed that the gentlemen should ride the first stage that evening, before the ladies set out, that they might have accommodations prepared for them against they arrived at —, which was to terminate their first days journey; and Sir William, after informing M. de Celandelle that he would return to him, set out with them.

It happened that both Mrs. Davenant and Hortensia remained ignorant of

this arrangement; and the astonishment of the latter may readily be conceived, when, four hours after the departure of her friend, she descended to the breakfast room, and found Sir William standing by one of the windows, intently examining a veil she had finished working for Cecilia two days before, and which had lain in the window-seat ever since.

Though there was certainly nothing Hortensia so little expected, as to find that the baronet still remained at the chateau, her mind was now too much depressed, for her surprize to be very lively either in the feeling or expression; for without even an exclamation, she curtseyed, though unobserved, and seated herself by the table,

It was several moments before Sir William gave up his contemplation of

the delicate work of Hortensia: he sighed deeply as he laid it down and turned from the window, when he first perceived the fair object of his reverie. But he saw her not with the same apathy that she had discovered him, though the meeting was to him equally unexpected: he advanced with alacrity, and taking her hand; “Miss Sydney!” said he, “Is it possible that I see Miss Sydney?”

Hortensia was betrayed out of her indifferent calmness, by the vivacity of his manner, and replied, “My surprize at seeing you, Sir William, when I thought you on your way to England, is as great, and I believe infinitely more pleasureable than your own. But have you not just parted with Mrs. Dave-

Q 3 nant?

nant? And has she not informed you of my remaining here?"

"No, Miss Sydney; I have not seen Mrs. Davenant: I purposely avoided meeting her, because I thought she was accompanied by one I could not endure to take leave of, though I had reason enough to acknowledge that we ought to part."

Hortensia looked astonished; but she forbore to require an explanation. The baronet after a moment's pause, in a voice of greater softness, and with a smile resumed: "I fear, Miss Sydney, that my conduct must in your eyes bear the stamp of absurd irresolution; whilst, if I attempt to explain it, you will too probably give it up to censure on the score of boyish enthusiasm unworthy of us both."

"*Of us both!* Sir William!" repeated Hortensia,

“Yes, Miss Sydney, *of both*. Without your heart, I feel I shall be miserable; and how unworthy am I of pretending to your affections, if I deserve not the suffrages of your understanding.”

This was certainly not the first hint Hortensia had received of Sir William’s attachment, but she was almost as much confused as if it had. So many had been the opportunities of declaring his sentiments that he had suffered to escape him, that she had ceased to expect it, and was therefore unprepared to answer.

She had once been determined, in case of such an event as the present, at once to crush his expectations by informing him of her inviolable attachment to the memory of St. Aubin, whom only she could *love*; and to tell him that could she resolve to marry, and found

her happiness on esteem only, she looked upon herself as bound to let that esteem plead for William Davenant. But those plans were now totally disconcerted.

In a letter which Capt. Davenant had received from his brother a few days before, William had mentioned a young lady who went with her father to India in his ship, in terms of such passionate admiration, as left little doubt that he had ceased to love Miss Sydney. And St. Aubin! Hortensia could not with truth assert that she was still wedded to his memory, nor in truth, was it, till she was just on the point of answering the baronet, that an idea of him crossed her recollection. When it did, she blushed; but she was infinitely too candid to make a plea of an attachment which

which had already shared the fate of its object; and Sir William Marlow had no reason to despair of her hand; though she declined to bestow it, till after her beloved brother and his Cecilia were restored to happiness and each other.

That event, however, was not quite so distant as Hortensia at the time imagined.

The disturbed state of Mr. Edward Sydney's mind, co-operating with the climate, threw him into a lingering disease, for which his native air was prescribed, and he returned to England in the next packet, after a stay of not more than ten days in India.

On receiving the news of his arrival in London, M. de Celandelle wrote to him, to prepare him to see Cecilia; whom,

whom, with Hortensia, he said he would himself convey to England, as soon as possible.

In less than a week this party, so long miserable, met in the lodgings of Mr. Sydney at Richmond; and their transports at this happy re-union, were shared by Miss Sydney and Sir William, who had attended that young lady to her brother's, and was in three weeks from that time united to her for ever; an event which gave the most heartfelt pleasure to all their friends; particularly M. de Celandelle, whose friendship for them both was equal.

For the remainder of the life of the venerable old man, which was spent in England with Cecilia, and was upwards of four years, his days glided on serenely;

renely; broken only by his regret for the death of the unhappy, and truly penitent Du Pont, who fell a victim to those severe penances his remorse urged him practice.

The felicity of Captain and Mrs. Davenant, contributed to the enjoyment of de Celandelle nearly as much as that of his own children: for by that tender title he always called Hortensia, as well as her brother: nor was he entirely uninterested in the fate of William Davenant and the lovely girl (the same who had gone out to India with him) that he afterwards married, and with whom he got a very large fortune.

Frequently, after her marriage, did Hortensia renew her rambles amongst the romantic cliffs of Beachy, and the groves

groves of Russelstown: not, as she had formerly done, to bewail the absence, or weep for the death of a favoured lover; but to retrace with a husband she adored, the events of her life so nearly connected with those scenes.

Hortensia, it was true, no longer considered St. Aubin in the tender light she had done, but Lady Marlow could never cease to think of the amiable and beloved relation of Sir William; nor did the baronet wish that she should: for in her frequent mention of the name of his cousin, he found the best proof that her sentiments for both, were precisely every thing he could desire.

F I N I S.



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